



PHRAKRUSANTINONTAKOON
THE CHIEF MONK OF BIG
BUDDHA TEMPLE
TEL. 077-245177



BIG BUDDHA WATCHES
OVER SAMUI THE PEOPLE
LOOK AND PRAY FROM LAND,
SEA AND AIR HIS SPIRIT IS
EVERYWHERE.

THE STORY OF THE BIG BUDDHA TEMPLE

This monastery is located on a small island off the northern coast of ko samui. It is approximately two acres in size and is about thirty kilometres from nathon's main centre, or one kilometre from samui airport. It is the site of the famous "BIG BUDDHA"

Originally. This site was a crematory for children under the age of seven, who for cultural reasons of the era were not cremated. But in 1920, the chief monk from the main temple in chaweng decided to convert this deserted site into a monastery, as he saw it as a perfect place for peaceful meditation. He and his disciple, and many local villagers began the process of conversion by digging up the remains of the children and then performing a special cremation ceremony in their honour before work began on the

monastery. But two months into the process he became very sick and died. His plan for a pagoda progressed no further than the base, and the site returned to its former deserted state.

Fifty years later, a new local monk took up the project again but constructed a statue of the big buddha in stead of the original pagoda. It took approtimately three years to complete and is fifteen metres high and twelve metres wide. There were also small houses built around the island for the monks to reside and meditate in. however, because it was built on an island, access was limited to either boat at high-tide or walking across the mud flats at low-tide. A wooden bridge was first erected to connect the island to the mainland, but because of strong monsoon rains only lasted two years. So a permanent causeway was constructed using earth from the surrounding hills.

THE LEGEND OF KO PHAN

This small island is known as “**ko-phan**”. Legend has it that a hunter and his dog were walking the beach on the mainland opposite the island when a phan, (small thai deer), appeared in front of them. The dog and the hunter began to chase the deer along the beach but before they could catch up with it, the deer lept into the water and swam to this island. The dog and the hunter followed in pursuit, only to find no trace of him when they got there. Magically the deer had disappeared. Tlence the name “**ko phan**” (island of the deer), and it is said that the ‘guardian spirit of island still presides over the island and keep things safe.

WHO BUILT THE BIG BUDDHA?

The local monk who took up the building the monastory again was called PHRAKRU SANTINONTAKOON. He was ordained as a novice in 1957 and three years later was ordained as a monk, when he was twenty- years old.

In 1965 he went to bagkok to study in the buddhist univerty. 1972 he returned home and started the process of building the big buddha. It took three years of continuious traveling between bangkok and ko samui to collect enough money through donations before it was completed. He regularly continued his visits to bangkok until 1982 when he decided to make ko phan his permanent residence.

THE PURPOSE OF THE CONSTRUCTION OF A MONASTORY.

1. to provide a place for meditation for monks and other interested people.
2. to create a place of worship of buddha for everyone.
3. to serve as a place for ceremonies such as of maka buja day,visaka day buja day, asaraha buja day ect..
4. to maintain the tradition of thai art and architecture.

All are welcome to big buddha temple

Pavicha thanalapho

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